IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

In Re Application of:	)
	)
Russell W. Bell	) Art Unit: 2143
	)
Serial No.: 09/579,309	) Examiner: Phuoc H. Nguyen
	)
Filed: May 25, 2000	) Confirmation No. 7169
	)
For: **System and Method to**	) Docket No. 60705-1240
Interface a Local Area	)
Network with a Wide	)
Area Network	)

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REPLY TO EXAMINER'S ANSWER

Mail Stop – Appeal Brief (Reply)
Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

This submission is in reply to the Examiner's Answer, mailed on June 3, 2004.

Applicant appreciates the indication that claim 27 would be allowable if rewritten in

independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

With the exception of the allowance of dependent claim 27 and the "Response to

Argument" on pages 7 - 16 of the Examiner's Answer, the Examiner's Answer has essentially

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copied and pasted the rejections from the Final Office Action. Consequently, Applicant stands behind the arguments set forth in the Appeal Brief.

With respect to claim group I, for example, Applicants emphasize that each of the Examiner's rejections apparently rely on the allegation that *Locklear* discloses that "the first computer is configured to assign *at least one virtual connection for each of the first and second computers* to enable the first computer to route WAN data traffic across the LAN (Figures 1, 2, and 3A; col. 5, lines 37 through col. 6, lines 21)." (*Emphasis added*, Examiner's Answer, pg. 8).
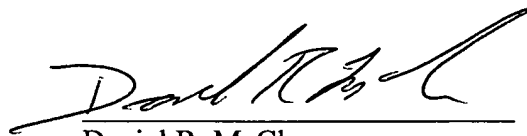
However, Applicant submits that the Examiner's characterization of *Locklear* is without any basis. Even assuming, *arguendo*, that a virtual connection is established for the second computer, there is <u>no</u> additional virtual connection assigned to the alleged first computer.

Applicant's FIG. 6 provides a visual reference of this distinction. The system includes a virtual connection (VC_M) for Master Computer 33 (*e.g.* a first computer) <u>and</u> a virtual connection (VC_1) for COMPUTER$_1$ (*e.g.* a second computer). In contrast, *Locklear* does not appear to use a similar protocol at all. Specifically, according to the teachings of *Locklear* there is no apparent need for the alleged first computer (FIG. 1, access server 16) to assign a virtual connection to <u>itself</u> to enable the alleged first computer to route WAN data traffic across the LAN. For at least this reason, and as more fully argued in Applicant's Appeal Brief, the Examiner's rejections are misplaced and should be overturned.

No fee is believed to be due in connection with this reply. If, however, any fees are required, you are hereby authorized to charge any additional fee that may be required to deposit account 20-0778.

Respectfully submitted,

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